

September 10, 2013

RE: MICHIGAN BICYCLE SHOP OWNERS EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE ROADWAY USER LEGISLATION (HB 4792 & HB 4799)

Dear Criminal Justice Committee Members,

Representing bicycle shop owners from across Michigan, we collectively voice support for efforts to establish a vulnerable roadway user designation for bicyclists, pedestrians and wheelchair users in Michigan, as numerous other states have done before us.

According to the Outdoor Industry Foundation, the bicycling industry in the East North Central region (MI, IN, IL, OH, WI) contributes **\$17 billion to the regional economy and supports 191,000 jobs across the region, generating more than \$2.2 billion in annual state and federal tax revenues.** While Michigan specific data is not currently available, it is safe to say that with nearly **215 bicycle shops across Michigan**, the local bicycle industry is blossoming, employing thousands of Michigan workers.

Safety remains the biggest concern for bicyclists and is a major deterrent for more people choosing bicycling as a mode of transportation, recreation, or health. A bicycle-friendly Michigan encourages more people to ride bikes more often, supporting the Michigan bicycle industry through increased bicycle sales, tune-ups, and other bicycle related retail purchases.

It is no surprise that the number one question customers ask us is, "Where can I safely ride my bike?" The reality is that bicyclists will continue to be marginalized and their lives jeopardized unless we teach Michigan drivers about their legal duty to share the road and establish strong enforcement mechanisms for those that fail to do so.

The most recent comprehensive data from Michigan State Police reveals that 1,981 bicyclists were involved in motor vehicle crashes in 2012, with 20 bicyclists killed and 1,598 injured. To put this into perspective, pedestrian & bicycle fatalities equaled 17% of all fatalities in 2012 but only accounted for 1.5% of traffic crashes. This demonstrates the inherent difference between what occurs when an automobile is involved in a crash and what occurs when a vulnerable roadway user is hit.

One of the best and most effective ways to reduce such fatalities is to properly educating drivers that bicyclists have equal rights and responsibilities on our roadways. MSP also reported that 68% of bicyclists killed in motor vehicle crashes were "just going straight ahead" prior to the crash. Enhancing Michigan's driver's education to include more bicycle safety training will help protect motorists and bicyclists alike.

Education alone, however, is not always enough. Vulnerable roadway user legislation will give prosecutors and judges additional flexibility to charge and punish reckless drivers. Such penalties would be similar to protections already established by Public Act No. 103 (2001), for drivers who injure or kill farm-vehicle operators.

Many drivers involved in serious crashes with bicyclists legally using public roads are rarely prosecuted and are often not even required to make court appearances. Currently, there are minor consequences for careless drivers that cause serious bodily harm to a bicyclist. Those that are convicted often serve as little as a few days or months for causing serious impairment or death to a bicyclist. Unless there is proof of gross negligence on the part of the driver, limited legal provisions typically get employed. In fact, it is not uncommon for blame to be shifted to bicycle victims with statements like, "This wouldn't have happened if they weren't in the road." This is why judges and prosecutors need better tools for controlling aggressive and reckless driving behavior and we as a state need to foster a culture that respects ALL modes of transportation.

Michigan bicycle shop owners strongly support the establishment of vulnerable roadway user protections for bicyclists. Comprehensive education and stricter penalties will help reduce needless injuries and deaths of bicyclists and other vulnerable roadway users and will ultimately help encourage more people to ride bicycles throughout the state. This is not only positive for Michigan's physical and environmental health, but a plus for Michigan's economic health. Please help advance Michigan's economic recovery and support local jobs by advancing policies that make Michigan a more bicycle-friendly.

Sincerely,

The undersigned 68 Michigan bicycle shops:

Tim and Sue Wilson
Adrian Lock and Bike
611 N. Main St.
Adrian, MI 49221

Al Comstock
Al's Quick Release Bicycle
Sales & Service
322 W. Flint St.,
Davison, MI 48423

Brian Walquist
Alger Cyclery
120 28th St. SW
Wyoming, MI 49548

Michael Reuter
American Cycle & Fitness
39900 14 Mile Rd.
Walled Lake, MI 48390

203 N. Perry St.
Pontiac, MI 48342

2169 Metropolitan Parkway
Sterling Heights, MI 48310

18517 Hall Rd.
Macomb Township, MI 48044

20343 Mack Ave.
Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236

20343 Mack Ave.
Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236

2243 W Grand River Ave,
Okemos, MI 48864

John Trexler
Anchor Bay Bicycle & Fitness
35214 23 Mile Rd.
New Baltimore, MI 48047

Todd Atkinson
B-Xtreme Cycle and Sport
415 E. Main St.
Midland, MI 48640

John Geminder
Bicycle Headquarters, Inc.
3310 Bay City Rd.
Midland, MI 48642 **Linda Blais**

Bike Times Bike Shop
1754 E. Clark Rd.
Lansing, MI 48906

Ken Polidan
Breakaway Bicycles
4741 Harvey St.
Norton Shores, MI 49444

185 Romence Rd.
Portage, MI 49024

215 North Ferry St.
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Tim Brick
Brick Wheels
736 E. 8th St.
Traverse City, MI 49686

Randy Martin
Continental Bike Shop
24436 John R Rd.
Hazel Park, MI 48030

John VanderPloeg
Cross Country Cycle
345 Douglas Ave.
Holland, MI 49424

Cycle-Re-Cycle
300 12th St.
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

Ernie Dell
Cycletherapy Bicycles
3545 Elizabeth Lake Rd.
Waterford, MI 48328

141 E. Walled Lake Dr.
Walled Lake, MI 48390

Denny Vandecar
Denny's Central Park Bicycles
1805 Central Park Dr.
Okemos, MI 48864

Jason Lowetz
Einstein Cycles
1990 US 31 N.
Traverse City, MI 49686

JJ Shaver
Flint City Bicycles
2213 Cartier St.
Flint, MI 48504

Paul Rogers
Fraser Bicycle
34501 Utica Rd.
Fraser, MI 48026

Gordy Bryan
Freewheeler
915 Leonard St.
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Alan Schlutow
HomeGrown Cycles
306 Potter
Royal Oak, MI 48067

Shaun Bhajan
Hometown Bicycles L.L.C.
10605 East Grand River Rd.
Brighton, MI 48116

Nicholas Mehl
Jack's Bicycle Shop
304 Patterson Ave.
Bay City, MI 48706

Jim DeGracia
JADE Cycles
4607 60th St.
Holland, MI 49423

Steve Johnson
Johnson Cycle Works
4293 Stony Ave.
Kalamazoo, MI 49048

Christian Janssens
Latitude 45 Bicycles
and Fitness
476 W. Mitchell St.
Petoskey, MI 49770

Jeff Radke
Macomb Bike and Fitness
28411 Schoenherr Rd.
Warren, MI 48088

Donald Clupp
Metro Bike-n-Sport
36649 Gratiot Ave.
Clinton Twp, MI 48035

Matt Marenger
Mr. Bike-Ski-Fitness
1016 Ludington St.
Escanaba, MI 49829

Tim Potter
MSU Bikes Service Cente
B10 Bessey Hall
E. Lansing, MI 48824

Bo Mayfield
North Country Cycle Sport
410 Howard St.
Petoskey, MI 49770

104 S. Park St.
Boyne City, MI 49712

Chris Kohn
On Two Wheels
550 Laurence Ave.
Jackson, MI 49202

Geroge Webster
P & T Fitness, Inc
225 N. Jackson St.
Jackson, MI 49201

Keith Riege
Paint Creek Bicycles
27 East Flint St.
Lake Orion, MI 48362

Kieth Little
Pro Sport
291 N. 8th St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

Dave Bourgeault
Pro Sports
2621 Ashmun St.
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Christian Janssens
Ride 45 Boards and BMX
1121 US 31 N.
Petoskey, MI 49770

Michele Barker
Rochester Bike Shop
426 S. Main St.
Rochester, MI 48307

Tim Meyer
Rock 'n' Road Cycle
300 N. Seventh St.
Grand Haven, MI 49417

91 Douglas Ave. #110
Holland MI 49424

Chris Gee
Roll Models, Inc.
6641 Park Ave.
Allen Park, MI 48101

Mark Childs
South Lyon Cycle
209 S. Lafayette St.
South Lyon, MI 48178

Chad Cottom
Spin Street Bicycles, LLC
206 E. Grand River Ave.
Lansing, MI 48906

Denny Whalen
Stable of Saginaw, Inc.
300 S. Hamilton St.
Saginaw, MI 48602

Seth Kleinglass
Sweet Bikes
39904 Ford Rd.
Canton, MI 48187

Jason Fiedler
The Hub of Detroit
3611 Cass Ave.
Detroit, MI 48201

Back Alley Bikes Educational
Community Space
3535 Cass Avenue
Detroit, MI 48201

Mike Clark
Velo City Cycles
77 East 8th St.
Holland, MI 49423

Mark Sanderson
Velocipede Peddler
2758 East Grand River Ave.
East Lansing, MI 48823

Dale Phelps
Village Bike & Fitness
450-A Baldwin St.
Jenison, MI 49428

5991 Kalamazoo Ave. SE,
Grand Rapids, MI 49508

2844 Thornapple River Dr. SE,
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

5278 Plainfield Ave. NE,
Grand Rapids, MI 49525

Evert Klopt Sr.
West Michigan Bike & Fitness
2830 East Paris SE
Kentwood, MI 49512

4300 Chicago Dr. SW
Grandville, MI 49418

326 S River Ave.
Holland, MI 49423

**Kelli Kavanaugh
& Karen Gage**
Wheelhouse Detroit
1340 E. Atwater St.
Detroit, MI 48207

Dewight Plotner
Wheels in Motion
3400 Washtenaw Ave.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Richard Gordon
**Zeeland Schwinn Cycle
& Fitness**
201 E Main St.
Zeeland, MI 49464

